



Morristown Muster

February 2017 Newsletter

Greetings!

Thank you for subscribing to Morristown National Historical Park's e-newsletter. We are pleased to keep you connected to your national park.

Inside This Issue

[Return to Regular Hours of Operation](#)

[Special President's Day Hours](#)

[Author Program on February 19th](#)

[Martha Washington's Winter Vacation 1779-80](#)

Return to Regular Hours of Operation

On February 11, 2017, the park's Visitor Services will return to its regular hours of operation:

[Washington's Headquarters Museum](#) - 9:30 am to 5:00 pm, Wednesday through Sunday

[Ford Mansion](#) - 10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm, Wednesday through Sunday



Jockey Hollow Visitor Center - 9:30 am to 5:00 pm, Wednesday through Sunday

Wick House - 9:30 am to noon & 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Wednesday through Sunday

Museum and Ford Mansion OPEN on President's Day

In honor of George Washington's birthday and President's Day, the Washington's Headquarters Museum and Ford Mansion will be OPEN on Monday, February 20, 2017.

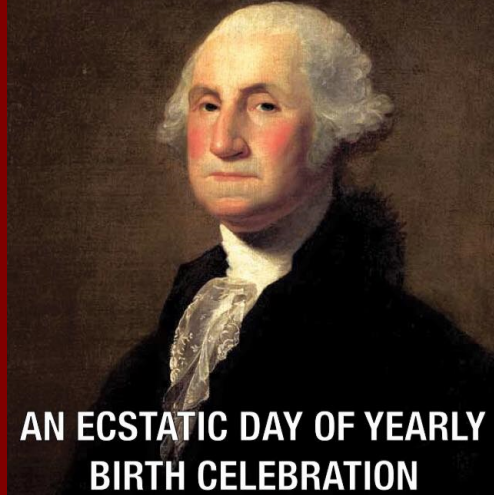
President's Day is also a service-wide FEE FREE day, meaning your visit to the park that day is FREE!

The Museum will be open from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm and tours of the Ford Mansion will be at 10 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm, and 4 pm.

Tours are limited to 20 visitors per tour and tickets can be picked up at Washington's Headquarters Museum. All tickets are first-come first-served, no reservations.

HEY GEORGE, HAVE THINESELF

AN ECSTATIC DAY OF YEARLY
BIRTH CELEBRATION



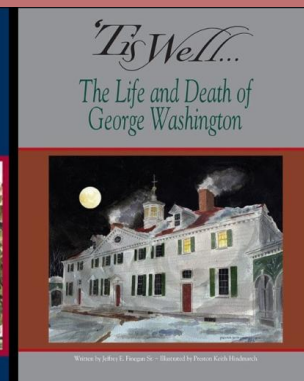
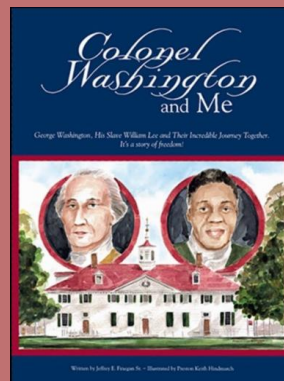
Author Jeff Finegan to Speak on His Two Books: *Colonel Washington and Me* and *'Tis Well... The Life and Death of George Washington*

In honor of both Black History Month and President's Day, we will be welcoming author Jeff Finegan to the Washington's Headquarters Museum for a presentation on his books *Colonel Washington and Me* and *'Tis Well... The Life and Death of George Washington*.

The talk will be at 2 pm in the Museum Auditorium and admission to the program is free. Book sales and signing will follow the program.

A Washington enthusiast for 25 years, Finegan published *Colonel Washington and Me* in 2012. The story follows Washington and his interactions with his enslaved valet, William Lee, who was mentioned and granted freedom in Washington's will. While most biographies of the first president mention the bond between Washington and Lee, this is the first book told through the eyes of Lee. William Lee accompanied Washington during the war, and spent the winter of 1779-80 with George and Martha Washington at the Ford Mansion in Morristown.

Finegan's second book, *'Tis Well... The Life and Death of George Washington*, also explores the life and legacy of our nation's founding father, but it offers a distinctly different perspective. *'Tis Well* takes a deeper look into Washington's family history



and early development, and also concentrates on the last two days of the general's life and funeral. This story is told through the eyes of surgeon James Craik, with whom Washington maintained a lifelong friendship, having met during the French and Indian War in the 1750s. It was Craik who was summoned to attend to Washington in his last hours.

While both books are intended for young readers, they have been meticulously researched and enthusiastically received by both the historic and literary communities. Pennsylvania artist Preston Keith Hindmarch brings the stories to life with his attractive illustrations.

Please visit our [website](#) for the most up to date information.

Martha Washington's Winter Vacation 1779-1780

By: Eric Olsen, Park Ranger/Historian

When you think of a winter vacation spot, Morristown, New Jersey, during the worst winter in United States history is probably not high on your list. But that is exactly where Martha Washington wanted to spend her time in 1780.

Her husband, General Washington, was too busy to return home. In fact, during the eight years of the American Revolution, General Washington only returned home for a few days before and after the victory at Yorktown in 1781. As a result, every winter of the eight-year war Martha traveled from Virginia to visit her husband.



Martha Washington's 1779 trip to Morristown wasn't easy. She started her trip late in the season with snow already on the ground. When she reached Philadelphia on December 21st, the snow was too deep for her horse-drawn coach to proceed to Morristown. General Washington had to send an officer with a horse-drawn sleigh to bring her from Philadelphia to Morristown. She finally arrived at the Ford Mansion on December 31, 1779.

Once she had settled in, Mrs. Washington took up the job of overseeing the work of the servants and cooks of the general's household. She visited or entertained other women who were visiting their families in camp. One visitor, Elizabeth Schuyler, described Mrs. Washington that winter:

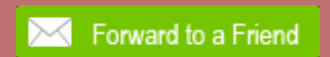
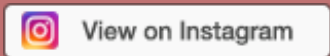
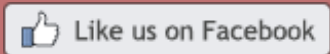
"She was then almost fifty years old, but was still handsome. She was quite short, a plump little woman with dark brown eyes, her hair a little frosty and very plainly dressed for such a grand lady, as I considered her. She wore a plain brown gown of homespun stuff, a large white neckerchief, a neat cap, and her plain gold wedding ring which she had worn more than twenty years. Her graces and cheerful manner delighted us."

Mrs. Washington's camp visit also included social functions with her husband including dances, dinners and military reviews for visiting ambassadors and congressmen. When the visiting Spanish Ambassador became ill, Martha became his nurse.

General Washington left the Ford Mansion on June 7, 1780 to deal with a British invasion that had advanced as far as Springfield. But he returned briefly on June 15th to say farewell to his wife as she began her month-long trip back to Virginia. A very fatigued Martha Washington finally arrived home on July 14th.

She described her Morristown winter vacation: "*there was not much pleasure thar the distress of the army and other difficultys th'o I did not know the cause, the pore General was so unhappy that it distressed me exceedingly....*" And after all her travel problems she swore: "*I suffered so much last winter by going late that I have determined to go early in the fall before the Frost set in.*"

Stay Connected



Feel free to contact us with any questions regarding the park or our ranger programs. We can be reached at 973-539-2016 ext.210 during regular business hours or you can email us at morr_interpretation@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

Morristown National Historical Park | 973-539-2016 ext.210
morr_interpretation@nps.gov | <http://www.nps.gov/morr>
30 Washington Place
Morristown, NJ 07960